

## UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

OCTOBER 11, 2017

The Upper Merion Township Planning Commission met for their regularly-scheduled meeting on October 11, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Building, 175 W. Valley Forge Rd., King of Prussia, PA.

Present: Matt Popek, Chair; Mark McKee, Vice-Chair; Vivian Peikin, Secretary; Jaque Camp, Member; Todd Brown, Member; Rob Loeper, Township Planner; Kyle Brown, Associate Planner; Maudy Hedlund, Recording Secretary.

Absent: Dr. William Jenaway, Liaison to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Popek opened the meeting with a pledge of allegiance to the flag.

### **Meeting Minutes: September 27, 2017**

Ms. Peikin motioned approval of the minutes. Mr. McKee seconded. Ms. Camp abstained. A 4-0 vote, in favor, carried.

### **Plan:**

#### **DP 2017-14: Ferro Corporation**

416 E. Church Rd. Construct a 9,000 SF building footprint for a 17,504 square foot building addition. Create 27 additional parking spaces with stormwater improvements, including a detention basin and related storm drainage piping. H/I District.

Present: Mr. Dennis Meagher, Ferro/ESL ElectroScience Laboratories, Operations Manager, Ferro Corporation, Vista, CA & King of Prussia, PA.  
Mr. Robert McDowell, Ferro/ESL ElectroScience Laboratories, Regional EHS Manager, North America.  
Mr. Harry Wister, Ferro/ESL ElectroScience Laboratories, Assistant Director, Facilities.  
Mr. Thomas Smith, PE, PLS, President, Bercek & Smith Engineering, Inc., Royersford, PA.

From Mr. Loeper's overview:

**Proposed Construction:**

The applicant is proposing a to build a thirty-foot tall, two-story addition plus a 400 SF single-story corridor to connect both buildings. The proposed addition will add 17,504 SF of usable space and expand the current building's size to 50,000 SF.

The plan has been submitted to the County and is under review by the Township's Engineer.

From the applicant's representatives' presentations:

**Intent:**

Ferro acquired the California-based company, ESL ElectroScience Laboratories, in the fall of 2016. The company plans to move the operation into the King of Prussia site, provided the proposed construction is done.

**Product:**

The company produces a printing ink that is used in electronic industries.

**Employees:**

The proposed expansion will add 26 new employees and will not involve relocations.

**Stormwater Management:**

Stormwater management, which was not required when the original development was built, will be provided. Stormwater from the new roof will be captured into a lined basin at the rear of the property. The site is part of Frog Run, one of the most sink-hole prone areas in the township.

**Maximum Impervious Coverage:**

The post-development site will have fifty percent greenspace.

**Road Improvements along E. Church:**

Road improvements are limited to installing curb returns for the handicap ramps on either side of the driveway.

**Sidewalk:**

A sidewalk, which exists along the parking lot and up to the front of the building, will be extended to the curb.

**Handicapped Parking:**

The handicapped parking area will be made compliant.

**Parking:**

The primary parking area will be newly-paved and provide parking spaces for twenty-seven additional vehicles.

**Shifts:**

Shifts for one segment of the operation run from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., five days a week. In the future manufacturing could add a second shift that consists of two or three people.

**Traffic:**

The addition of twenty-six new employees might add a mild increase in frequency.

**Loading docks:**

The proposed addition will add a second loading dock to the site.

**Shipments:**

UPS or FedEx shipments arrive five times per day. Pick-ups are made in the afternoon.

**Waivers:**

The applicant requested waivers for:

- Two man-made features within 200 feet of the site.
- A traffic impact study.

**Motion:**

Mr. McKee made a suggestion that the Board of Supervisors approve Development Plan 2017-14 for a new 9,000 SF footprint building that provides 17,000 additional square feet. The Planning Commission appreciates the applicant's addition of stormwater management where there currently is none and, with the suggestion that the additional pedestrian safety improvements be added, recommends approval. Ms. Camp seconded. A 5-0 vote, in favor, carried.

**Zoning Ordinance: Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU) Ordinance.**

Establishing a new zoning district along South Gulph Road for small-scale neighborhood-appropriate mixed-use development.

Present: Mr. Yil Karademir, North Realty, Inc., and area resident, King of Prussia.

Mr. Loeper gave an overview of the Ordinance that the Planning Commission has grappled with for the last twenty years.

Highlights from Mr. Brown's presentation:

**Maximum impervious coverage:**

The current maximum impervious by right coverage for the R1 District is 25%.

The proposed maximum impervious by right for the General Commercial (GC) is 80%.

Limited Commercial (LC) and Neighborhood Commercial (NG) allow 75%.

Group discussion on the 75% maximum prompted a member to be more in favor of allowing the impervious and -- if it's an issue -- of allowing latitude on how much parking is required rather than limit the impervious to the point where if someone wanted to put a building on the site all they could get is a parking lot.

**Developability:**

On the assumption that the entire NMU district would be developable, there would be 1,344,000 square feet. An aerial presentation depicted: undeveloped and/or un-managed parcels; properties with substantial green coverage; and properties that, over time, acquired substantial impervious.

**Sidewalks:**

A majority of the members preferred to not include the required eight-foot sidewalks in the 75% maximum impervious coverage. One member expressed a preference for a maximum impervious coverage of 60% and an incentive system.

**Green Area Requirement:**

Mr. Loeper noted that a provision in the Code permits a pedestrian path, which requires planting buffers and stormwater management, to be counted as "green."

**Stormwater:**

Some members felt that developing the Neighborhood Mixed Use District is likely to improve the stormwater management. Mr. McKee respectfully disagreed, as Frog Run will see a significant increase in the amount of runoff. Frog Run is the most sinkhole-prone watershed in the township.

**Cross Access Easements:**

Group discussion addressed the driveway's codified width; the vehicular access standards requirements; and the property owner's right to select the location of the curb cut. Mr. McKee expressed an interest in offering flexible incentives to smaller lots and properties.

**Additional Provisions Request:**

In response to Mr. Popek's request, members provided comments on how they felt about the draft NMU Ordinance:

- "It was a very well thought-out, well-intentioned proposal that our township and its residents need. Its generators came from the property owners."
- "The draft ordinance may need some finessing."
- "There could be challenges in implementing it."
- "The by-right retail uses, such as convenience stores and bars, are high-traffic generators. The additional turning movements from this two-lane roadway will compromise the functionality and safety of S. Gulph Road as an important north south arterial roadway. Prior studies recognized that this arterial should be maintained for traffic flow."

A follow-up discussion will be held at a future meeting and a final draft will be reviewed by our Solicitor and submitted to the County.

**In closing:**

Mr. Popek thanked Mr. Brown for his hard work.

Mr. Loeper informed members of the upcoming Citizen Board's Luncheon.

**Meeting adjournment:**

Mr. Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Camp seconded. There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Sincerely yours,

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VIVIAN PEIKIN, SECRETARY

**UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**

**OCTOBER 11, 2017**

TO: UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FM: UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

REF: DP 2017-14: Ferro Corporation  
416 E. Church Rd. Construct a 9,000 SF building footprint for a 17,504 square foot building addition. Create 27 additional parking spaces with stormwater improvements, including a detention basin and related storm drainage piping. H/I District.

PRESENT: Matt Popek, Chair; Mark McKee, Vice-Chair; Vivian Peikin, Secretary; Jaque Camp, Member; Todd Brown, Member; Rob Loeper, Township Planner; Kyle Brown, Associate Planner; Maudy Hedlund, Recording Secretary.

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The members of the Commission reviewed the above referenced plan.

Mr. McKee made a suggestion that the Board of Supervisors approve Development Plan 2017-14 for a new 9,000 SF footprint building that provides 17,000 additional square feet. The Planning Commission appreciates the applicant's addition of stormwater management where there currently is none and, with the suggestion that the additional pedestrian safety improvements be added, recommends approval. Ms. Camp seconded. A 5-0 vote, in favor, carried.

I do believe the opinions expressed herein, do properly define the position of the Commission.

Sincerely yours,

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VIVIAN PEIKIN, SECRETARY